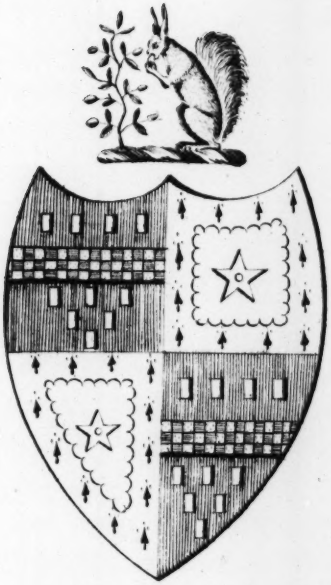

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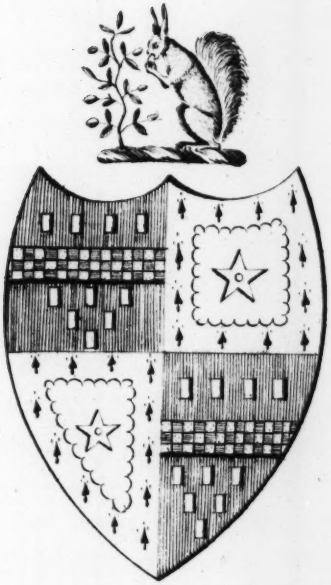

Harry Lancelot Lee Esq.

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THE

PHILOSOPHICAL QUIXOTE;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

Mr. DAVID WILKINS.

IN A

SERIES of LETTERS

VOL. II.

LONDON.

Printed for J. JOHNSON, in St. Paul's Church-yard

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MAR

THE

PHILOSOPHICAL QUIXOTTE;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

Mr. DAVID WILKINS.

LETTER XV.

DEAR SIR,

I MENTIONED in a former letter that I was greatly miſtaken if our amorous Deborah was not with child. You, however, are the only perſon to whom I had ever communicated my ſuſpicion. But I have ſince met with

a variety of circumſtances to confirm me in that opinion. She has frequently been ſqueamiſh and ſick at ſtomach. Has artfully pretended to have been troubled with certain *obſtructions*, for which Mr. Wilkins preſcribed the moſt powerful emmenagogues without effect. Is grown ſo large about the waiſt, that Mr. Wilkins, miſtaking it for fat, produced her among others of her profeſſion, as a proof of his doctrine of abſorption. And I had obſerved that ſhe had lately accuſtomed herſelf to lace ſo tight that ſhe could hardly breathe. An incident, however, has ſince occurred, which has effectually demonſtrated the truth of my ſuſpicion, as you will find by the ſequel.

Solomon,

Solomon, among other of his ſtudies, catching his maſter's enthuſiaſm, entered on that of *chemiſtry*; and purſued it with the greater avidity, as he found that ſome of the books which he read on that art, treated, in high ſtrains, of the *tranſmutation of metals into gold*. From the ridicule thrown on this ſubject, by later writers, he remained for ſome time in ſuſpence about the practicability of ſuch a ſcheme. But when he found that the opinion of the great Boerhaave, and ſome others, was in its favour, it at once determined his belief; and in the hope of making a rapid and princely fortune, applied himſelf intenſely to the great enquiry. His inveſtigation, however, was carried on with that profound ſe-

crecy, which the nature of the ſubject required; inſomuch that no one but himſelf and Deborah, knew of his being engaged in the purſuit. The experiments, as it appears ſince, were uſually made in Deborah's room, after the family was gone to bed; and it ſeems that he had made no little number of them without the leaſt ſhadow of ſucceſs. He had frequently mentioned the ſubject in a curſory way to me; and as I now conclude, by way of *pump*, for ſuch information as I was able to afford him. One morning in particular, after ſeeming to laugh at the folly of thoſe who proſecuted ſuch ridiculous reſearches, he aſked me, with a degree of ſerioufneſs, which I could not but remark, whether I really

really thought that any one had ever been in poſſeſſion of the ſecret, and whether I was of opinion that the fact was poſſible? As I am not yet turned of fifty, I was ſeized with an itch of having a little diverſion at his expence; and replied, in a more ſerious ſtile than I had uſually obſerved on the occaſion, "that it was certain that ſome writers of credit had aſſerted the poſſibility of the thing; that from the teſtimony of the ſame authors, it was probable that the ſecret had formerly actually been known, and that I had read in an author of ſome eminence, that the famous powder of projection, or *philoſopher's ſtone*, was compoſed of lac ſulphuris, ſalt petre, and ſalt of broom aſhes," all which we had in the

ſhop. I made uſe of theſe names that he might have no ſuſpicion of my deſign; as in the courſe of his reading I did not know but he might have met with the recipe for the *pulvis fulminans*. He was particular in enquiring the proportions, and manner of preparation. I gave him the former; and with reſpect to the latter, told him that the ingredients reduced into powder, muſt be melted together in a crucible, kept in fuſion for a certain time, and then the maſs to be taken out for uſe; but that the particular manner of its application, in order to the tranſmutation of metals, was the part of the ſecret which I could not inform him of, and which therefore he muſt endeavour to find out by proper experiments. I was

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in hopes that he would have taken the hint and ſat about it immediately, and meant to have *egged him on.* But buſineſs happened to call me off at the inſtant, and (together with other matters of greater importance to myſelf) drove it out of my memory for the remainder of the day. It ſeems, however, that he immediately prepared for the experiment, by powdering and mixing the ſeveral ingredients. And that at night, when all others were gone to reſt, our alchymiſt repaired, *as uſual,* to the chamber of his Dulcinea; and having lighted a fire, entered on the important project, his charmer in bed waiting anxiouſly for the ſucceſs. The mixture, however, had not long been on the fire before an event hap-

pened that he little expected, which diſſipated all his mighty hopes *in fumo*. For preſently after the fuſion, a moſt violent exploſion took place, equal to the report of an ordinary cannon. The houſe, as with an earthquake, ſhook to the foundation. The operator fell inſtantly backward as a dead man. The fair one, frightened with the noiſe, uttered an horrid ſhriek, which was followed by another and ſtill more dreadful one, on viewing her beloved's exit, and inſtantly fell into fits. I heard the noiſe; even Wilkins heard it! We ran up ſtairs, and as ſoon as we diſcovered the room which was the ſcene of diſtreſs, forced open the door, and how did both Mr. Wilkins and myſelf ſtare at the ſight we beheld!

held! Deborah (in fits) was undreſt, and in bed; the door had been faſtened inſide, and part of Solomon's cloaths were apparently put off as in courſe. My ſuſpicion, and perhaps pique, led me to view this part of the affair in its proper light, though as yet I ſaid nothing. But Mr. Wilkins it ſeemed judged otherwiſe. He concluded that Solomon had forcibly entered the room, with intent to commit premature matrimony upon, and violate the chaſtity of the affrighted fair! I, however, was at a loſs to account for the ſulphurous ſtench, and other appearances around. But Mr. Wilkins, it ſeems, concluded that the chaſte Lucretia had piſtoled the villain in his libidinous attempt, of which, he imagined,

gined, ſhe was aware in conſequence of ſome previous offer; whence he accounted for the exploſion and ſmell. But on approaching and examining him, we could neither of us diſcern the leaſt appearance of a wound. He felt warm, and on applying our fingers to his wriſt, a pulſation was plainly to be perceived. Mr. Wilkins called him by name; and I, leſs tender, ſeverely pinched him. He preſently came to himſelf; and looking around, and perceiving his ſituation, took the opportunity, while we were engaged with Deborah, (who now began violently to ſcream and ſtruggle in her fit) to give us the ſlip; and notwithſtanding my purſuit of him, by the favour of a dark night, eſcaped. I returned

turned to the room, where I found Mr. Wilkins attentively engaged in endeavouring to recover the ſtruggling fair; and he ſeemed much vexed when I informed him of the culprit's eſcape. But our attention was now wholly demanded by the object before us, whoſe paroxyſms continued with increaſing violence, and threatened the moſt alarming conſequences. We opened a vein, applied volatiles to her noſtrils, bathed her temples with hartſhorn, threw open the windows for air, and plied her both inwardly and outwardly with cold water, impregnated with volatiles and aſſafœtida. From ſome incoherent expreſſions which ſhe uttered in her delirious ſtate, I was further convinced of the juſtneſs of my conjectures,

conjectures relative to her pregnancy; and appearances in the courſe of her fits put it beyond a doubt. I remained ſilent, however, on that point, and Mr. Wilkins, whoſe ideas on the occaſion were got into another track, did not appear likely to conceive the hint. At length ſhe, in ſome meaſure, recovered her ſenſes; and her confuſion, on perceiving her ſituation, may be more eaſily imagined than deſcribed. She immediately, however, began to caſt about for an excuſe; and though Mr. Wilkins furniſhed her with an eaſy one, by officiouſly and condolingly aſking, if his conjectures (which he ſtated) were not true, yet, perhaps, on feeling the approach of labour, hearing of the flight of her paramour,

and

and judging that he would not ſpeedily return, ſhe, to our great ſurpriſe, informed us that ſhe was married, and about eight months gone with child; but that, for particular reaſons, their nuptials had hitherto been kept ſecret; after which ſhe explained the circumſtances which had occaſioned the preſent confuſion, as above related; adding, that ſhe already foreſaw the effects of her fright, for that ſhe felt every ſymptom of approaching travail. The latter indeed, proved to be the caſe, and a labour ſo painful, it would, perhaps, be difficult to parallel. Notwithſtanding the no very good will that I bore her on account of her treatment of me, the groans, extorted by the agony of her pains,

pains, added to the circumſtance of her being a married, and therefore virtuous woman, diſſipated every idea of reſentment, and melted my heart to the moſt tender pity; and certainly there is hardly a ſituation of human nature, which demands that ſympathy ſo much as this. Her ſituation was the more dreadful, as beſides the diſturbances occaſioned in her ſyſtem by the fright, ſucceſſive fits, and anxiety of mind, the rigidneſs, and † * * * * * * * were ſuch, (as is too frequently the caſe, when the firſt labour does not happen on this ſide forty) that Mr. Wilkins deemed it abſolutely impoſſible that ſhe could be properly delivered. She remained

† The ſeven or eight words following this were ſo blotted in the original, that they could not be made out.

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in this terrible ſtate two whole days. Inſtruments, and all other methods uſually employed on theſe occaſions were tried in vain; and ſeeing no other reſource, I propoſed to Mr. Wilkins, to ſave the life of the unhappy mother, by deſtroying the child. Wilkins looked at me with a kind of horror: "What, ſaid he, would you be guilty of murder? Such advice, in the days of Harry the Eighth, would have been extremely proper; but now that the obſtetric art has been ſo variouſly and capitally improved, it betrays either want of humanity, or of information. Have you not heard of the famous invention of thoſe foreign heroes in ſcience, who, by dividing the ſymphyſis pubis, not only ſave the life of the child, but render the

delivery

delivery eaſy to the mother? I replied that I had indeed informed myſelf of the particulars of that operation, though it, unaccountably, did not occur to me. In giving him my ſentiments on the meaſure, I obſerved that "it was the opinion of the firſt authority in this country, that it was not to be adopted but with great caution, and in caſes of extreme neceſſity; that however, the preſent inſtance juſtified the having recourſe to it, as it was evident that the life either of the child or mother muſt elſe be ſacrificed; and the agonizing and truly pitiable ſituation of the latter demanded the moſt immediate aſſiſtance." It was therefore determined by Mr. Wilkins to perform the operation. But the terror of the unhappy patient at the idea of it

(for

(for ſhe conceived it to be dreadful indeed!) was paſt deſcription; and as ſome time elapſed before we ſat about it, (for as neither Mr. Wilkins nor myſelf had ever ſeen it performed, it was neceſſary to conſult the original papers) it will not, perhaps, appear miraculous, that the force, or rather fright of imagination, effected what art had deemed impoſſible; for the delivery actually commenced; but the ſcreams of the mother, in conſequence therefore, were enough to frighten one. She became quite raving, and we were obliged to have proper aſſiſtants to hold her down. In this dreadful agony ſhe continued ſeveral hours, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty, even at laſt, with every expedient that art could

ſuggeſt, that the delivery could be effected. The infant was to appearance dead; and the mother was ſeized with a fainting fit, from which we had reaſon to fear ſhe would never recover. By inflating the lungs of the former, and adminiſtring volatiles and cordials to the latter, both however, were, in ſome meaſure, at length recalled, though it was a long time before either appeared any thing like living; and the mother continued ſo ill, in conſequence of the tortures ſhe had undergone, notwithſtanding Mr. Wilkins's ſkilful treatment and aſſiduity, that her life for ſome weeks after was deſpaired of.

As Mr. Wilkins is naturally of a humane and tender diſpoſition, you will

will not be ſurpriſed that this affair made a very deep impreſſion on him; eſpecially as the patient was an old and favourite domeſtic, for whom he had a real regard, as you will judge when I inform you that he had bequeathed her an annuity in his will, ſufficient to maintain her comfortably for life. I obſerved him to be exceedingly penſive and thoughtful for ſome days after this melancholy affair happened. He was wholly abſorbed in deep meditation, and his mind ſeemed big with ſome great, but as yet unknown event.

I happened one morning to be in the ſtudy, poſting the book; Mr. Wilkins entered in the thoughtful mood

deſcribed, and in his uſual morning dreſs. He walked about for ſome time with his arms folded, and his hands locked in each other, alternately. He frequently pauſed; ſtood penſive, with his eyes fixed on the ground; and ſometimes lifted them up as towards the cieling. At length he came up to me; and after remaining a while deeply intent, and heaving a profound ſigh, not without an evident pleaſure in his countenance, he at length broke ſilence in the manner following:

"The late dreadful ſituation of my unhappy ſervant, to which you was witneſs, and the ſufferings of the tender ſex, in general, in the bearing of children, (which yet is neceſſary to the continuance of the ſpecies) have excited

cited in my breaſt the deepeſt commiſ-ſeration; and prompted me to explore, if poſſible, ſome mode, either of freeing them entirely from their ſubjection to ſo painful and perilous a ſituation, or at leaſt, in ſome meaſure, to alleviate it. I wiſh, however, to remove it entirely; and my intenſe application to this important ſubject in the courſe of ſeveral days paſt, has, I truſt, been productive of ſomething that will anſwer to that idea." † Hiatus in M.SS.

* * * * * *

† Mr. Wilkins, in his zeal for the good of his fellow creatures, then went on to propoſe,

——— "*Some other way,*
"*To propagate mankind.*"

MILTON.

This method (with a very ſingular experiment ſet on foot to prove it) appeared ſo curious to ſeveral who ſaw the original letters, that it took wind,

This is the ſcheme which I have formed, and to which I can at preſent

and numbers of gentlemen acquainted with Mr. Dennis, became deſirous of a peruſal. But one of the firſt of theſe gentlemen to whom they were lent, has, it ſeems, been ungenerous enough to monopolize the whole of this pleaſure, by ſecuring to himſelf that part of the preſent letter, in which this extraordinary propoſal was contained. In this mutilated ſtate the original was ſeen by the Editor; and (unfortunately for the public) he has not at preſent any means of ſupplying the deficiency. He can only therefore, inform the reader of what he has heard of this matter from others, viz. that Mr. Wilkins, by proceeding on the theory of a celebrated Britiſh phyſiologiſt now living, and attending to the various modes of generation in different animals, had been happy enough to reduce that proceſs in the human ſpecies to ſuch a ſtate, that as we can hatch eggs without the incubation of the hen, ſo we could, by means of Mr. Wilkins's wonderful diſcovery, hatch human beings *without the travail of the mother!*

But,

ſent ſee no reaſonable objection. And I cannot but conſider it as the greateſt and happieſt diſcovery for man, or rather woman-kind, that has yet been revealed to the world. The proceſs is more advantageous than even in the claſs of animals from whom it was derived. For the happineſs expected from the wedded ſtate, will remain in its fulleſt extent, and yet every veſtage of the numerous train of ills which have hitherto been the diſmal conſequences of conception, be wholly removed. The mother will no longer be ſubject to the evils attendant on

But, alas! this important ſecret is now loſt to the world; at leaſt till Mr. Wilkins himſelf, or ſome gentleman to whom it is known, ſhall be pleaſed to reveal it.

geſtation, the dangers of abortion, or the excruciating tortures of labour; all which, together with their too frequent bad conſequences, the tender and indulgent huſband muſt feel, by ſympathy, to an equal degree. Their mutual happineſs will no more be damped by a dread of the conſequences, ſince they may now, according to the old proverb, *dance without paying the piper*. Gratitude to their benefactor will prompt them to erect eternal trophies to my memory; pæans will daily be ſung in my honour; and my name will be tranſmitted as firſt in the liſts of fame, to the lateſt poſterity." * * * (Hiatus in M.SS.)

I ſcarce need mention, dear Dennis, that my appetite is reſtored, and that

I am now ſome pounds heavier than when I wrote to you laſt. My amiable MARIA is well, as I had the happineſs of hearing but yeſterday; an happineſs greater than even that which would be enjoyed by Mr. Wilkins, ſhould his experiment of hatching human beings, without the geſtation of the mother, turn out to be a demonſtration of his theory. For this, as well as every other bleſſing that I may enjoy in future, I ſhall ever conſider myſelf as indebted ſolely to your goodneſs and friendſhip, of which the moſt lively ſenſe of gratitude will ever be retained, by

Yours, &c.

P. S. Since this epiſtle was finiſhed, we have received a letter from Solomon

mon, who it ſeems, is returned to his own country; is about ſettling there, and for that reaſon has wrote to Mr. Wilkins to ſend him his moveables. He has (to uſe a vulgar expreſſion) *let the cat out of the bag*; painted Deborah in her proper colours; made it appear that ſhe abſolutely debauched him; and that they were not married, nor did he ever intend it. The diſcovery has quite diſconcerted poor Deborah; and as for Wilkins, he is ſo incenſed againſt her, on account of her *fornication* and *hypocriſy*, that he has paid her wages and turned her adrift, notwithſtanding ſhe was ſcarce capable of walking out of the houſe. She is in a lodging in the neighbourhood till ſhe is a little recovered, when ſhe means,

through

through ſhame, to quit this part of the country; though I think Mr. Wilkins ought to have treated her otherwiſe, were it only for the ſake of the *diſcovery*, of which ſhe was the *occaſion*. Happily, however, for me, we have now both man and maid in the houſe who do not ſeem calculated to give me any of thoſe little uneaſineſſes which I formerly complained of, ſo that I am now in every reſpect perfectly happy in my ſituation.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

DEAR SIR,

YOU have had occaſion to obſerve that Mr. Wilkins's philoſophical enquiries are not confined to the narrow limits of his profeſſion, but that they extend to every other ſubject in which the good of the community is concerned. This will ſufficiently appear by the following relation.

Among the many capital diſcoveries made by modern philoſophers, thoſe which tend to ſecure us againſt external accidents and injuries, eſpecially from the elements, are particularly deſerving of applauſe; and enough cannot

cannot be ſaid of Dr. Franklin, for his invention of preſerving us againſt the effects of lightning; of Dr. Prieſtley for enabling us to detect the noxious qualities of the air we breathe; or of the ſtupendous diſcovery, which has of late years been ſo ſucceſsfully practiſed, for reſtoring drowned people to *life!* The evil of which I am about to ſpeak, is not, indeed, ſo dreadful, or ſo fatal as theſe, yet is, in my opinion, one of the moſt diſagreeable accidents to which we are ſubject; and when I have occaſionally been expoſed to it, I have imagined that no improvement in philoſophy could be more valuable than one which would ſecure us againſt its effects. How often have I, when

caught

caught in an heavy ſhower of rain, at a diſtance from any ſhelter, and unprovided with a great coat, wiſhed, alas! vainly wiſhed, for ſuch a diſcovery! It ſeems that this idea had alſo occurred to Mr. Wilkins, and determined him to turn his talents to the enquiry. The following was the reſult of his deliberation.

It is well known (he obſerved) that when it thunders and lightens, it moſt commonly rains. That clouds are electrified, ſometimes negatively, at others poſitively; that rain diſcharges that electricity, and conducts it to the earth, and that experiments had actually demonſtrated that falling drops of rain were electrified, and ſome-

times

times pretty ſtrongly. Now he argued thus:

"Bodies poſſeſſed of contrary electricities, ruſh together, or attract each other. But bodies mutually electrified, either *plus* or *minus*, are, on the contrary, repulſive. If therefore, a drop of rain be in *plus*, and the human body be alſo in *plus*, they will mutually repel each other; and if the electricity be ſufficiently ſtrong, the repulſion will be ſo great that the drop will be diverted from its perpendicular courſe, and *turned away obliquely from the body.* The ſame thing will happen if the electricity be ſtrongly *negative.* Conſequently a man thus charged, may walk through the

the heavieſt ſhower of rain that ever fell, without being in the leaſt wetted by it."

He was ſo rapt with his diſcovery, that he immediately communicated it to me, together with his deſign in conſequence thereof. The abſurdity of the concluſion was ſufficiently obvious; but it was not now, for ſeveral reaſons, my intereſt to contradict him. I therefore highly applauded his invention, as well as the propoſal which he made, of at once verifying his theory by experiment, and blazoning it, with his fame, to the world. The nature of the diſcovery, therefore, was announced to the inhabitants of the country around, who were invited to aſſemble at Mr. Wilkins's houſe on the firſt appearance

pearance of a thunder ſtorm, to be witneſſes of the truth of the fact, and, if they choſe it, to be the ſubjects of the experiment.

The curioſity of the public was excited in courſe, and nothing was talked of but Mr. Wilkins, and his great diſcovery. His foes, (for all men have enemies) repreſented it as a mad attempt, and of a piece with the known character of the man. They therefore ridiculed it accordingly, and prognoſticated that it would end in *ſmoke*. His more numerous friends as zealouſly propagated a contrary language; arguing, from the opinion of their opponents concerning the *impoſſibility* of the thing, *the greatneſs of the diſcovery*;

and juſtifying its likelihood by a late ſimilar one of the illuſtrious Dr. Franklin. But every one was eager for the arrival of the day.

At length, the important period arrived. The forked lightning flaſhed—the big thunder rolled; "the ſky was overcaſt, the evening lowered, and heavily with clouds, brought on the hour, the great, the important hour, big with the fate of Wilkins, and his project." The people eagerly aſſembled, and Mr. Wilkins, after having ordered out (in a booth erected for the purpoſe) the *electrical apparatus*, proceeded to demonſtrate his important theory.

His

His firſt ſtep was to diſcover the nature of the cloud's electricity; and he found it to be highly *poſitive*. Two dozen pair of *ſhoes*, with ſoals of *baked wood*, of a proper thickneſs, were preſently put on by ſome of thoſe who were eager of the honour of being concerned in this great buſineſs; not a fourth part of whom, for want of a ſufficient quantity of electrical ſhodding, could be admitted to ſhare in the honour of the experiment. They were ſcarcely prepared, but the rain began to deſcend; and in a ſhort time it even threatened a deluge. The happy twenty-four, mounted on their magic ſandals, were ſtrongly electrified *plus*; and proper directions being given them not to touch any non

electric ſubſtance, they were turned adrift into the dreadful ſtorm. The expectation of Wilkins was immenſe! But, alas! the imperfection of human inventions! The inſulated heroes no ſooner trod on the ground, than (the wet, forming a connection between their bodies and the earth) their electricity was ſuddenly diſcharged. And as they had been ſtrongly electrified indeed, in order to make the experiment ſurer, the ſhock which they felt in conſequence thereof was terrible! They ſprung aloft, with a loud ſcream, into the air; many of them, reft of ſenſe; and looſing their ſelf balance, fell forward on their faces, lying like breathleſs corpſe' on mother earth, which was ſtained red with the fluid

iſſuing

iſſuing from their bloody noſes. They who retained their ſenſes, ſmarting from the violence of the ſhock, wet through, and concluding from the loud laughter, and cutting jeſts of Wilkins's foes, that they had been decoyed into that ſituation, only to be made fools of, flew upon poor Wilkins in their rage, and would probably have demoliſhed him, had he not happily been reſcued by the better part of the company, and conveyed away in ſafety. On his electrical apparatus, however, they had no mercy, but conſidering it as *infernal*, inſtantly broke it piece-meal, "burning the diabolical fragments."—The poor fellows are the ſtanding jeſts of the town to this hour, and will be ſo I imagine during their lives. Whenever

ever it rains, they are drily aſked, *Why don't you put on your electrical ſhoes?*—Thoſe people who are more knowing, ſee this affair, in courſe, to Wilkins's diſadvantage. Others look upon it as a piece of philoſophical *fun*, and imagine that he had deſignedly *taken in* the ignorant town's people. Wilkins, though the diſappointment has moſt terribly galled him, has ſenſe enough to take the hint, and propagate the latter opinion; though even that has not a little injured his long eſtabliſhed character, with reſpect to *gravity*.

I am, dear DENNIS,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

DEAR SIR,

OUR neighbourhood has lately been infeſted with a very uncommon kind of fever, which, notwithſtanding the utmoſt attention of Mr. Wilkins to the ſubject, made at firſt very conſiderable ravages, and carried off numbers. The uſual methods of treatment in fevers ſeemed ineffectual; and ſuch as happened to recover, evidently owed their lives, not to any ſkill of the Doctor, but to the partiality of nature. Mr. Wilkins's pride was touched at being thus baffled; and he determined to ſet all his

faculties to work, in order to diſcover a method of repelling this formidable invader.

If a phyſician would do any thing capital in practice, it is well known that he muſt be very ſedulous in *obſerving nature*. It is from that ſource only that we can hope for real improvements in the medical art; and all theories that are not built on that foundation, ought to be conſidered as the mere reveries of a diſtempered imagination. Mr. Wilkins was ſufficiently ſenſible of this important truth.

The lady of an eminent attorney in the town, and one of Mr. Wilkins's moſt intimate friends, was ſeized with the

the reigning complaint; and notwithſtanding that Mr. W.'s utmoſt ſkill was exerted in her favour, ſhe daily grew worſe, inſomuch that himſelf, at length, deſpaired of her recovery. It was now the thirteenth day of her illneſs. Putrid ſymptoms had for ſome days appeared, and ſhe had been delirious almoſt from the beginning of the diſorder. The lady, it muſt be obſerved, was pregnant. She had a brother in the Weſt of England, whom herſelf and ſpouſe, a few weeks before, had taken a journey to viſit. As this gentleman treated them with country fare, one of the liquors which they occaſionally drank was *ſtrong beer and brandy*; which, in thoſe parts, is a favourite potation; and, it ſeems, particularly

ticularly hit our lady's palate; ſo that her fancy had ran on it, at times, ever ſince. In the afternoon of the day mentioned, ſhe appeared to be more ſenſible than ſhe had lately been, though the fever raged almoſt as high as ever, and (to the old woman's no little ſurpriſe) whiſperingly aſked the nurſe, "if ſhe could not help her to a tankard of *beer and brandy?* for that ſhe violently longed for it, was beſides, parching with thirſt, and was certain that *that* alone would cure her diſorder." The nurſe remonſtrated with her on the impropriety of her requeſt, and gave her to underſtand, that it could by no means be complied with. This, however, ſerved only to encreaſe her deſire. Her importunity redoubled;

led; and ſhe, at length, became ſo outrageous, that her ſpouſe thought proper to conſult Mr. Wilkins on the occaſion. He was immediately ſent for, and after examining the patient, and her requeſt, gave it as his opinion, "that ſo inflammatory a liquid, in the lady's preſent ſituation, would infallibly be fatal to her." At the ſame time he ſhook his head, and appeared greatly dejected. On being aſked the reaſon by the lawyer, he replied, that "from the ſymptoms that appeared, he thought it his duty, as a friend, to warn him of the approaching melancholy event, for that the lady would certainly die before the morning." Mr. Wilkins's interdiction, by no means ſilenced the lady's longing. Her

deſire

deſire after the favourite potation increaſed; and ſhe, at length, raved for it ſo violently, that her indulgent huſband, unable to behold her longer in ſuch agony, and conſidering that even Wilkins had given her over, ordered a tankard of it to be immediately prepared; adding, "that as ſhe was paſt recovery, it was at leaſt charity to make her as eaſy as poſſible during the little time ſhe had to live." The liquor, therefore, was brought; I need not inform you how raviſhed ſhe was at the ſight of it; with what greedy reliſh ſhe ſwigged it down, or what an immoderate quantity ſhe drank before ſhe was ſatisfied. Her longing was thus ſcarcely appeaſed before ſhe appeared more tranquil and eaſy; and notwith-

notwithſtanding the quantity of inflamable ſpirit which had juſt entered her blood, her fever evidently abated; ſhe fell into a ſweet ſleep; a kindly perſpiration ſucceeded; and next morning the diſorder appeared to have in a manner left her, little beſides the weakneſs in conſequence of it remaining. When Mr. Wilkins called, he was ſurpriſed to find that ſhe was ſtill living; but when he ſaw the alteration in her health, he could hardly perſuade himſelf but that it was a viſion. Convinced, however, of the reality, he was very eager indeed, in queſtioning by what wonderful means ſo great a revolution in the ſtate of the lady's health had been effected? And being informed that it appeared to be

owing

owing entirely to her having been indulged in the liquid which himſelf had forbad, an hint immediately ſtruck him, and he remained for ſome moments in one of thoſe profound paroxyſms of meditation uſual to philoſophers, who have got ſcent of a capital diſcovery. But he was ſoon awakened from thence by the diſcourſe addreſſed to him by the overjoyed huſband. After heartily congratulating him on the unexpected recovery, and ſettling the meaſures to be adopted in future by the patient, he hurried home. When he entered the ſhop, I obſerved him to appear, as it were, loſt in a pleaſing reverie, and without taking notice of any one, he haſtened to his ſtudy.

Mr.

Mr. Wilkins has a book in which he daily writes down the hiſtory of his practice. It happened to be left out a few days after through neglect, and I found, among others, the following curious remarks.

" *Aphoriſm.* Obſerve nature, watch all her motions. In doubtful caſes, and new diſeaſes, this is the phyſician's only guide. Even when ſhe cannot relieve herſelf, ſhe yet (like a drowning man) in very intelligible language, points out the means to be adopted by art for aſſiſting her.

" *Mem.* In the caſe of the new fever, the divine oracle has, at length, ſpoke. Her dictates have been obeyed, and the diſorder in conſequence thereof has been

been cured. Art was at a' loſs for a proper remedy. Nature cried out *beer and brandy.*

" *Corr.* Beer and brandy therefore is a ſpecific for the new fever."

After he had remained in his ſtudy a conſiderable time, he went out and viſited the remainder of his patients; and when he came home, to my very great ſurprize, (for he did not at that time think proper to mention his reaſons) directed for each of the patients labouring under the new diſeaſe, a draught compoſed of brandy and ſtrong beer, every four hours. The remedy was continued daily. But the patients, to a man, evidently grew worſe, the

the inflamable ingredients in the medicine, (as might have been foreſeen) augmenting the ſymptoms. Convinced, however, that the patient in the caſe related, owed her recovery entirely to this remedy, and the period at which ſhe had taken that grand ſpecific occurring, he, at length, conceived that the ſucceſs was owing to its having been given *at the criſis of the diſeaſe*. He tried it in a variety of caſes in this way, in the young and old, in males and in females; and in different conſtitutions. He alſo varied the quantity in different patients, giving it to ſome in great profuſion; to others in a more moderate way; but not one of the patients ſurvived: on the contrary, their deaths were evidently haſtened by the

medicine. At length, he was ſo happy as to meet with an inſtance of recovery. As this, and the preceding, were the only ſucceſsful ones, he conſidered attentively (as I afterwards learnt) what ſimilarity or connection there was between the caſes of the two happy patients? and he diſcovered that they were both with child; "beer and brandy therefore, he concluded, was a ſpecific when given to *pregnant women* at the criſis of this diſeaſe, but hurtful in all other caſes." He plumed himſelf not a little on his ſagacity in having aſcertained ſo curious a fact. A few days afterwards he adminiſtred the remedy to a lady in the ſituation mentioned, in full confidence of its ſucceſs. But contrary to his firm expectation,

pectation, her end was ſo viſibly haſtened by it, that it did not eſcape the notice of the friends and attendants; who, in the heighth of their grief, did not even ſcruple (to Mr. Wilkins's no little mortification) to hint to him their ſuſpicions. He was once more, therefore, thrown on the wide ocean of doubt, from which all his ſagacity proved inſufficient to reſcue him. Struck with the firſt fact, he was ſtill poſitive that it involved a real diſcovery, and concluded that his not having yet developed it, was owing ſolely to his own want of ſagacity; ſo that being no longer able to bear the diſtraction of his thoughts, and earneſt to get at the truth, he, at length, deigned to diſcloſe the whole matter, in

confidence to me, and ardently preſſed me to give him my beſt advice.

Had I not been apprized of the buſineſs, and had it been of a leſs ſerious nature, it would have been impoſſible to have ſuppreſſed my riſibility. But being prepared, I kept my countenance tolerably compoſed; and after he had ended his ſolemn harangue, anſwered him to the followed effect:

"That the difficulty attending the *treatment of a new diſeaſe*, eſpecially of the preſent kind, was ſo great that the public were infinitely indebted to him for the pains he had taken in ſo important a particular. The only method of acquiring that knowledge I owned

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was from *obſervation*, or (as he had more emphatically expreſſed it) by *liſtening to the voice of nature*; but that in the preſent inſtance, I humbly apprehended he had not rightly interpreted her language. In the caſe of Mrs. B——, nature I imagined, had not ſpoken with reſpect to the general treatment of the diſeaſe under which ſhe happened to labour. That longing in diſeaſes, was by no means uncommon, but that ſuch longings, or the cures reſulting from appeaſing them, were not uſually conſidered by practitioners as connected with the diſeaſe itſelf, but with the particular ſituation of the patient at the time. It had not, for example, been uncommon for a perſon in a fever to crave

for porter, and to receive a cure in conſequence of that longing being gratified. But it had not been inferred from thence, that porter was a ſpecific in fevers, or even that it would have the ſame effect on the ſame patient, if it was not preceded by the violent longing; which indeed was properly the diſeaſe cured by it; the fever being only mitigated in conſequence of its removal, as it had before been exaſperated by its preſence. That the greateſt poſſible care was required in generalizing propoſitions, but more eſpecially in medicine, where the leaſt error might be productive of the moſt ſerious conſequences. In the preſent caſe there was ſomething more than I had yet noticed, for that

by

by his account, the lady was pregnant. The liking to the liquid had been conceived previous to the illneſs; and probably ——." I was going on, but Wilkins's good ſenſe (the miſt being now diſſipated) eaſily perceiving the ſtrength of the argument, he was aſhamed of his error, and begged that no public mention might be made of it. Indeed, though I, at times, laugh at his extravagancies, yet upon the whole, I cannot but admire his natural good ſenſe, and benevolent and amiable diſpoſition. What few failings he has, evidently proceed from an exceſs of the latter virtue, *an ungovernable paſſion for diſcovering the uſeful*, which indeed is capable of leading a man into

the moſt glaring and ridiculous abſurdities.

As we have ſince repeatedly conferred together on the ſubject of the diſeaſe, and mutually attended to its appearances, we have happily hit on a more ſucceſsful method of treatment. As it begins with violent inflammatory ſymptoms, we bleed and evacuate plentifully; and if we are called in time, a proper uſe of theſe, together with a temperate regimen, generally prevent any fatal conſequences; and I have the happineſs to inform you that the diſorder is now viſibly diſappearing in this part.

Your ſincere Friend, &c.

LETTER XVIII.

DEAR DENNIS,

AMONG Mr. Wilkins's other oddities, I wonder I have never yet written to you on his *abſence of mind*, to which, on account of his intenſe meditation, he is very ſubject; and frequently requires as much the aſſiſtance of a *flapper*, as the mathematicians in the *flying iſland*. I ſhall give you a few inſtances of it in this letter.

As his thoughts are ſo much employed in ſpeculation, and as (like Sancho) he cannot reſiſt the impulſe of any new and pleaſing idea, he frequently ſtarts up from dinner, or from company, as if ſuddenly poſſeſſed, and retires

tires to his ſtudy in order to ſecure the precious remark. The like ſometimes happens even when moſt ſeriouſly engaged with his patients. A perſon unacquainted with his ſingularities, would at firſt conclude him to be diſordered in his ſenſes.

One evening he had been writing a letter to the celebrated Dr. Huxham, (with which therefore he had taken ſome pains) containing the caſe of a young lady in the neighbourhood, for the Doctor's opinion. When he had finiſhed, he proceeded to throw ſome ſand over it; but, being totally abſorbed in contemplating his performance, he took the ink glaſs by miſtake, and very calmly ſhook out its contents. As the

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mere writing had coſt him much pains, and as the poſt was that inſtant preparing to ſet off, I do not remember to have ſeen him in ſuch a paſſion, as on diſcovering his blunder.

He had one day been deeply meditating on the emetic qualities of antimony; and in the midſt of his ſpeculation, had occaſion to write down a *recipe* for a chalybeate draught for Lady T——. But antimony running in his head, inſtead of writing *vin. chalybeat.* ℥ ſs. as he intended, he wrote *vin. antimonial.* I took it for granted that he meant it for an emetic, and made it up as directed. The lady had not taken it many minutes before it began to operate violently indeed! Wil-

kins

kins was ſent for in haſte; and learning the circumſtance, took it for granted, that I had committed an error. When he returned he had ſcarce began to inform me of it, but, caſting his eyes on the day book, he diſcovered the miſtake to be his own; and retired, ſeemingly convinced of the danger of a medical practitioner, indulging reveries while engaged in buſineſs. Luckily, however, the ladies complaint proved to be a foul ſtomach, ſo that the emetic was of more ſervice to her than the chalybeat could poſſibly have been.—To this anecdote might be added, that it is by no means uncommon for Mr. Wilkins to forget his appointments. A patient ſends for him in a hurry. If he does not happen

to

to note it in his liſt immediately, it is much if it does not ſlip his memory. I have known him engaged in a labour, where in an interval of eaſe, he has aſked leave of abſence for a quarter of an hour to viſit ſome patient whoſe caſe was urgent. A philoſophical reverie has driven all thought of the lady out of his head; and he has rode off half a dozen miles, the Lord knows where, in the uſual courſe of his buſineſs, leaving the unhappy patient to be delivered as ſhe could.

A few weeks ago he had an invitation to dine at B——, a village about fifteen miles diſtant. As he had a patient or two to call upon in his way, to ſave himſelf the trouble of coming back,

back, he ordered the porter, then newly come, to follow him, intending to ſend home by him the preſcriptions. But neither of the patients happening to want any thing, and forgetting the orders he had given to Thomas, he rode away on a full trot towards B—. Thomas followed as faſt as his legs could carry him; and you will eaſily conceive the lathered and breathleſs condition in which he arrived at B—, as he kept pace with the horſe all the way; and the weather was not a little ſultry. Wilkins was aſtoniſhed to behold him on alighting, and imagined he was come for him to ſome caſe of emergency. But on explaining the circumſtance, Wilkins very humanely and genteely apologized for his forgetfulneſs,

getfulneſs; gave him a crown; bid him go to ſome inn to reſt and refreſh himſelf, and afterwards to walk home as leiſurely as he could. But begged him particularly not to divulge the ſecret; an injunction which, as you will perceive by this letter, was rigidly obſerved.

After having been hard at work in the elaboratory, and being quite exhauſted and faint with fatigue, he repaired to his cloſet, in order to recruit his ſpirits with a dram; an indulgence which he never allowed himſelf, but on ſome extreme occaſion. In the ſame cloſet ſtood a bottle of lamp oil; and as his thoughts were ſtill intent on his operations, he laid hold of the latter,

latter, (the firſt bottle that offered) and without examination, poured out a glaſs full, and drank it off. His thirſt and abſence hindered him from perceiving it at the inſtant. But preſently after he diſcovered his miſtake; a violent nauſea and ſickneſs was the conſequence, and evacuations upwards and downwards employed him, at home and abroad, for the remainder of the day.

One morning as he was dreſſing, and at the ſame time deeply meditating on my caſe, the thought of the doctrine of *abſorption* ſtruck him juſt at the inſtant of pulling off his night ſhirt, and he flew to pen and paper to take it down. His fancy was ſo tickled with the

the diſcovery, that when he returned to his toilet, forgetting that he was in buff, he put on his coat and waiſtcoat, (without his ſhirt) and as he was rather beyond his time, rode away in haſte to viſit the young daughter of Lady S——, of whoſe delivery I formerly gave you an account. After examining the patient, he ſat down to breathe a little; and being over heated with the hurry of his journey, and the warmth of the day, threw open his waiſtcoat to cool himſelf.—The bluſhes of the ladies on viewing his naked belly, the merry jokes of Sir John, and the confuſion and aukward apologies of Wilkins, I leave to be ſuggeſted by your own more fruitful imagination.

About a fortnight ſince he was ſhaving himſelf, (for he never truſts that operation to a barber) and when he had done about one half of his face, the other remaining covered with lather, (like the barber's cuſtomer in the Upholſterer) a new and brilliant theory ſuddenly dazzled his imagination, of which I mean to give you an account in ſome future epiſtle. He immediately laid down his razor, and flew to his ſtudy; and as the idea was fruitful, and kept him in conſtant employ for more than half an hour, he was of courſe quite loſt in his reverie. At this time the Counteſs of ——, a patient of ours, whoſe ſeat is at a village about three miles diſtant, called in her coach and deſired an audience with

with Wilkins. I immediately ran to inform him. He ſtartled at the name, which dazzled him more than even the viſion from which he was awakened, as he had by this time pretty well exhauſted it on paper. But totally forgetting his *bodily* ſituation, he flew to the chariot at the door, in the condition deſcribed, heightened by an old greaſy woollen night cap, which had formerly been red and white, neither of which colours were now very diſtinguiſhable, and his old ruſty morning gown, whoſe colours were equally faded, bound round his waiſt with the red garter as formerly deſcribed. His ſtockings were down over his ancles, and his ſhirt collar tucked under his waiſtcoat, to ſave it from the lather.

My lady, knowing (I imagine) her man, could not refrain from a loud fit of laughter, on ſeeing him in ſuch a pickle; which quite diſconcerted Wilkins, who did not at firſt perceive the reaſon of it. But obſerving at the ſame time a mob gathered round him, and hearing their ſarcaſtical remarks, he inſtantly recollected himſelf; and overwhelmed with confuſion, precipitately retired, ſtammering out an excuſe as he fled; but unfortunately, in his haſte, tumbled over the ſtep at the door, which in his hurry, and retrograde retreat, he did not think of, which added not a little to the riſibility of her ladyſhip, and the reſt of the ſpectators. I obſerved his dilemma, went out immediately, and made

made a proper apology to her ladyſhip, whom I eaſily prevailed on to walk into the parlour till Mr. Wilkins ſhould be in a condition proper to appear before her. His apology on entering, and the agreeable manner in which ſhe received and rallied it, added not a little to the entertainment, or to poor Wilkins's confuſion; and he has not yet heard the laſt of it from the family.

Mr. Wilkins's abſence is ſo notorious that the very boys make their jeſt of it. One day as he was walking up the town in a very thoughtful mood, and ſolemn pace, halting at times, as is cuſtomary with people in ſuch a ſituation, he happened very unluckily

to be eſpied by one of the fellows who engaged in the electrical experiments lately recited, and who had ever ſince been waiting for an opportunity of revenge. Perceiving him to be perfectly abſorbed, he engaged ſeveral boys, who were at play juſt by, to bring, from a neighbouring reſervoir, a veſſel full of a certain ſomething, of no very agreeable odour, the name of which I ſhall leave to your ſagacity to diſcover. The material was gently emptied out on the ground, and one of the boys, by the man's direction, laid himſelf down about a quarter of a yard before it. When Wilkins arrived, he in courſe ſtumbled againſt the boy, (the fellow behind, at the ſame inſtant, giving him a friendly puſh,

puſh, leſt the ſtumbling block ſhould not have been ſufficient) and he fell plump into the quagmire. The plight in which he found himſelf, added to the exulting taunts of his foe, and the loud laughter of the boys, together with his diſcovering that ſeveral of the firſt gentry of the town were eye-witneſſes of his unſeemly condition, produced in poor Wilkins, a ſituation of mind, which, though it may be imagined by a lively fancy like yours, would be very aukwardly repreſented by the unſkilful pen of

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIX.

DEAR SIR,

I HAD been half inclined to think, notwithſtanding a former remark, that Mr. Wilkins's principal inducement to philoſophical purſuits, was, (as himſelf believes) *the hope of being uſeful to mankind.* But have lately ſeen ſufficient reaſon to alter my opinion.

Being lately in one of his beſt humours, and when the fit of communication was on him, he took me into his ſtudy, and opening his eſcrutore, took out a large bundle of manuſcript papers, (a ſpice of that vanity which is common to ſcribbling mortals, evi-

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dently appearing in his countenance) and addreſſed me on the ſubject of them in the following ſtrain.

" I have been labouring in the philoſophical vineyard, for the good of mankind theſe twenty years paſt, my dear Harcourt, but the world is as yet very little benefited by my diſcoveries, as I have hitherto, through a natural diffidence, confined them to the ſmall circle of my practice. But I now feel a ſomething within me which tells me that I do the world an injuſtice in withholding them, and that it is the indiſpenſable duty of every one who makes an uſeful diſcovery, to communicate it. I compare the diſcoverer of truth, to the rich man; he

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is only the ſteward, to whoſe care the good things of the world are committed, not to miniſter to his own pleaſures, but to diſpenſe them for the good of others; and I hold the man who makes any other uſe of either to be highly criminal. I enter on this buſineſs the rather, becauſe I am not now a young man; and ſhould I happen to die, my executors, not knowing the value of my papers, they may either be wholly loſt to the world, or at beſt very inaccurately and imperfectly given.

"As I have conceived an high opinion of your underſtanding in philoſophical matters, I would wiſh to have your judgment on theſe papers, previous

to

to their publication ; *and you will defeat my intention in this meaſure, if you do not give that judgment* IMPARTIALLY. Authors are too apt to be blind to their faults ; though I believe I may venture to ſay that this is leſs the caſe with me than with moſt others. I would beg, however, to hint that the papers which I am about to ſubmit to your ſcrutiny, will require your utmoſt attention ; for I have ſent ſeveral of them to the *Royal Society*, the Council of which, through not being capable of underſtanding them, have, I imagine, ignorantly concluded them to be of no value, for as yet I have not ſeen any notice taken of them in the Philoſophical Tranſactions. And I am ſorry to obſerve, that that once famous ſociety

ciety is degenerated from what it was in the days when honoured with the name of the illuſtrious NEWTON. But permit me to repeat, dear Harcourt, that if you think my lucubrations will not do me honour by the publication, by all means inform me of it; criticiſe me without mercy, for by that I ſhall meaſure your friendſhip. Should works which have coſt me ſuch immenſe labour, and ſo much ſtudy, be coolly received by the public, or gibbetted in the reviews, I do not know that I ſhould be able to ſurvive the piercing grief which it would occaſion me. Not that I have any fears from proper judges, but it is poſſible that others may be as incapable of comprehending the truth, and diſcerning the merit of

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the doctrines contained in theſe papers as the Council of the Society. This age, alas! is not an age of ſcience!"

From this ſpeech, which ſo evidently ſpoke the man, and his real motive for *ſtudying for the good of mankind*, it was not difficult to take the hint of my conduct. It was obvious that the only way of *obliging* him was by a non-obſervance of his injunction. The fate of *Gil Blas* would teach me as much; and you well know that it is not now my intereſt to make Mr. Wilkins my enemy, as an honeſt compliance with his requeſt would infallibly do. I therefore made him an anſwer expreſſive of my ſenſe of the high honour which he did me, and the friendſhip he manifeſted

feſted for me, in this inſtance of his confidence, and aſſured him that his injunction ſhould, to the beſt of my ability, be obſerved. The titles of ſuch of the papers as I recollect (for I have forgot the greateſt part of them) were as follow:

"A new and compleat ſyſtem of *vitality*; demonſtrating, by invincible arguments, that air is the vital principle in animal bodies, "from the little ſparrow on the houſe top, to the lordly creature in the ſuperb manſion."

"A treatiſe on negative electricity." In this paper it was propoſed to be proved, that *negative* electricity is poſſeſſed of medicinal virtues, directly oppoſite

poſite to *poſitive*. That as one was a *ſtimulus*, the other was a *ſedative*; as one *increaſed*, the other muſt *diminiſh* perſpiration, &c.

" A propoſal for a new, eaſy, and pleaſant method of curing diſeaſes by conveying the virtues of medicines into the ſyſtem by means of electricity."— The medicine whoſe virtues were to be introduced, was to be placed within the conductor, or otherwiſe; the electricity diſcharged through which into the patient's body, would carry with it into the ſyſtem, part of the ſubſtance of that remedy.

" A demonſtration of the ſuperior efficacy of *blunt conductors*, in ſecuring buildings from lightning.

" A new

" A new practice of phyſic; proving that the bile is the cauſe of all the diſeaſes incident to the human body, and demonſtrating the great importance and neceſſity of an univerſal antiphlogiſtic regimen.

" A treatiſe on the medicinal uſes of hemlock, henbane, and other poiſonous plants. With *caſes* ſhewing their efficacy in a variety of diſeaſes.

" An eſſay on the great utility and importance of admitting mathematical, mechanical, and metaphyſical reaſoning into medicine.

" A new ſyſtem of ſurgery, demonſtrating the impropriety and abſurdity

of

of dreſſing wounds, fractures, &c." In this treatiſe it is propoſed only to bind up the wound, or fracture, after replacing the bone, and leave the cure entirely to nature.

"A vindication of the *general* uſe of *inſtruments*, in *parturition*.

"An attempt to prove that the gout is an effort of nature to make a *ſore*: to which is ſubjoined a propoſal for curing that malady by the application of bliſtering plaiſters to the part.

"A demonſtration of the great utility of extracting ſugar from potatoes, and certain other vegetable ſubſtances.

"Chemical elements of agriculture; ſhewing the great advantages of ap-

plying the principles of the hermetic art, to that ſcience.

" A new ſyſtem of aſtronomy; containing an account of the original formation of the planets, and their hiſtory, from the time of their being knocked off from the ſun by the comet, to the preſent age.

" A treatiſe on light and fire; *proving* that they are compounds of *phlogiſton* and *empyreal air*."

" A diſſertation tending to ſhew, that phlogiſton has a *centrifugal force*; and that it diminiſhes the gravity of bodies.

Chamelionia;

Chamelionia; or, a demonſtration, that animals are not nouriſhed by the food they *eat*, but by the air which they *breathe*.

To theſe were added ſeveral, treating of ſubjects which have already been mentioned in my former letters, and therefore need not here be touched upon.

On theſe performances, and many others not noticed, I made occaſional remarks; but they were ſuch as would either tickle, or at leaſt not wound, the vanity of the author. I adopted the plan of the ingenious Editors of the Medical Regiſter. They praiſe many books, but cenſure none. Their ſilence, however, is conſidered as equivalent to the moſt ſevere ſatire, though

Mr. Wilkins, by no means, conſtrued any paucity of praiſe of mine into ſuch meaning. As I have myſelf, occaſionally ſcribbled in the news-papers, and magazines, I knew ſomething of an author's weak ſide; and as my happineſs requires that I ſhould make Mr. Wilkins my friend, I, by no means, miſſed the golden opportunity of tickling him in his tender part. His friendſhip for me in conſequence thereof, has riſen even to enthuſiaſm. He therefore determined to publiſh his works as ſoon as he could prepare them for the preſs, and has ſince been indefatigable in reviſing them. But as he ſeemed above all things to dread their not being ſo well received as he wiſhed, and even died, as it were, at

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the thought of being cut up by the Reviewers, (notwithſtanding his pretence of publiſhing merely for the public good) the hope of ſtill further ſecuring his friendſhip, prompted me to propoſe to him to *inſure* ſucceſs to his labours, by adopting the following meaſure.

"That as ſoon as the volumes were publiſhed, he ſhould get two or three of his friends to call themſelves *the Mathematical Society*, one of the members of which, ſhould write him a letter, as in the name of the whole body, paying him the higheſt compliments imaginable on his diſcoveries, deſcribing their importance and great utility, pointing out the infinite obligations

which the world is under to him on account of them; and ranking him the foremoſt of all thoſe who have benefited the world by uſeful diſcoveries. That to this letter there ſhould be ſubjoined an anſwer, thanking the learned ſociety for their honourable and glorious teſtimony in his behalf; but at the ſame time, intimating a conſciouſneſs that the applauſe was not unmerited. That theſe letters ſhould be printed in all the news-papers, and periodical publications. That the world would imagine it to be the act of the *Royal Society itſelf*, no other mathematical ſociety being known; which idea ſhould be ſeconded and induſtriouſly propagated by himſelf and friends; and which by the way, would afford him ample revenge on the

the R. S. for their treatment of his *invaluable* papers. That this ſtep would effectually ſecure the applauſe of the public; and perhaps awe even the *reviewers themſelves* into reverence and adulation. If he thought he could not ſucceed in ſuch a meaſure among his acquaintance, or did not like to propoſe ſuch a thing to them on the ſcore of *delicacy*, the letters might be fabricated by *himſelf*; for that to my own knowledge the trick had been played by an author now living with all imaginable ſucceſs.

He ſmiled at my propoſal, but whether or no he means to adopt it, I cannot tell, for we were juſt then interrupted by an urgent meſſage from a

not tell, for we were juſt then interrupted by an urgent meſſage from a patient, and I have not ſince had an opportunity of diſcourſing with him on the ſubject. His virtue and good ſenſe, will undoubtedly lead him to deſpiſe ſuch a meaſure; but how far his vanity and fears may incline him to liſten to it, muſt be left for experience to determine.

I am, &c.

LETTER XX.

DEAR DENNIS,

MR. Wilkins ſupped and ſpent the evening out about a week ago, (a thing which he very rarely does) and there happened, it ſeems, a *fracas* between the lady and gentleman whom he viſited. The former, to uſe the Engliſh phraſe, *wears the breeches*. I heard of this lady's fame the firſt day after my arrival at S——, as the moſt noted ſcold in this part of the country. She is indeed, a perfect virago, as you may judge by the following relation.

After ſupper Mr. M——, (the lady's huſband) propoſed to paſs the remainder

remainder of the evening in making entertaining philoſophical experiments, of which he was very fond. Mr. Wilkins, no doubt, would readily have conſented, as it was juſt in his *own way*. But the lady propoſed cards. As Mr. Wilkins was, by no means, fond of cards, he ſeemed rather to favour the huſband's propoſal; and the latter, feeling that it became his dignity as maſter of the houſe, to ſupport his own nomination, ſeconded as it was by the only perſon in company, repeated his motion in more urgent and peremptory terms. Mrs. M——, nettled at being contradicted, reddened up and told him, that "ſuch nonſenſical ſtuff ſhe really deteſted; and that if he was determined on introducing it, ſhe would

leave

leave the houſe for the evening, and go to ſome neighbour who would be more indulgent of her deſire," adding, "that it was hard indeed to be contradicted in ſo trifling an affair. Had ſhe propoſed any thing unfaſhionable or uncommon, he then might have had ſome reaſon for objecting." Wilkins whiſpered to Mr. M—— to accede, for quietneſs ſake, to the lady's propoſal; but the latter, aſhamed to be *henpecked* before company, determined to maintain his authority, and inſiſted that no cards ſhould be brought upon the table that evening; calling at the ſame time to the ſervant to bring up the philoſophical apparatus. Mrs. M——, whoſe temper is highly choleric, flew from her ſeat in a rage, and in the violence

lence of her paſſion, uttered an oath, "that if a ſervant dared to bring any inſtruments into her preſence, ſhe would tear them in pieces, and throw them into the fire;" and the footman very unluckily entering at that inſtant with an electrical machine, and an air pump, ſhe flew towards the door in a moſt violent fit of rage, and fairly did as ſhe had threatened. Fired at the affront offered to himſelf and viſitor, Mr. M—— vented his reſentment (in words) at his beloved, who not being uſed to ſuch ſpirited behaviour, from an *huſband*, and fearing that if ſhe once gave way her dominion was at an end, not only returned him his own with intereſt, but not finding a ſufficient vent for her mighty rage by the or-

gans

gans of vociferation, ſpit repeatedly in his face, with all the venom of *diſappointed woman*; and ſeizing the prime conductor which lay on the floor, beat it about his head, at a moſt unmerciful rate. The choler of M—— being rouzed by the ſmart of the blows, he began to return the compliment; a pitched battle enſued; and, what you will ſay is rather extraordinary, *the grey mare proved the better horſe*. For being a large maſculine woman, and M—— but a ſlender man, her temper alſo being hot and violent, and his on the contrary, rather milky, the former, giving full looſe to her ire, fell too without dread of the conſequences, and even hoping for the worſt; while the latter, more tender hearted, and

fearful

fearful of hurting his antagoniſt, may rather be ſaid to have acted only on the *defenſive*. In five minutes time, however, the ſkin of M——'s whole face had yielded to the fierce nails of his Amazonian opponent, who tore it away with as little remorſe as an Indian ſavage would the ſcalp of an enemy. She had made her teeth meet in various parts of his body; and a knife being at hand (behold, huſbands! the dire effects of female rage) ſhe cut him in two places, and in all probability would have diſpatched him, had he not inſtantly fled from the room, and fortified himſelf in another apartment. Mr. Wilkins, frightened at the uproar of which himſelf had been the unwitting cauſe, after ſtriving in vain to reconcile

concile the parties, eſpecially when he found that M—— was ſafe, fled home in the greateſt horror; but had ſcarce entered the ſhop when M—— appeared at the door, in the bloody condition deſcribed, in order to have proper remedies applied to his wounds; for which purpoſe he had eſcaped out at the parlour window. His bodily wounds being dreſſed, his friend Wilkins very humanely and affectionately endeavoured to pour the balm of comfort on thoſe of his mind. But ſoon found that the mutual tide of their grief was as yet too great; and inſtead of acting the part of the calm mental phyſician, ſwelled the flood of his friend's ſorrows to its utmoſt height, by demonſtrations of the moſt tender ſympathy,

pathy, and melting pity. He fell on Wilkins's boſom, and gave full looſe to the grief and agony of his heart, which was ſo great that he could not refrain from a violent and long continued flow of tears. The ſenſe of his unhappy ſituation quite unmanned him. "O my dear friend, he cried, would that I had never married! And yet why do I give utterance to a wiſh which my heart even now recoils at? I loved her to diſtraction before I wedded, and found myſelf miſerable without her. I ſtill love, I even doat on her, notwithſtanding her faults. I know they are involuntary, and proceed from a violence of temper which, unhappily for us both, is not in her power to controul. Were her diſpoſition but even

tolerable,

tolerable, how bleſt ſhould I think myſelf in the poſſeſſion of her! Has heaven, alas! which has afforded ſuch ample means of relief for the diſorders of the *body*, provided no remedy for thoſe of the *mind?* Were it poſſible, my dear friend, that her temper could be altered to what I once imagined it, what is there that I would not ſuffer, what is there that I poſſeſs, which I would not joyfully give, to the phyſician who ſhould make the happy diſcovery?"

As Mr. M—— durſt not venture home, he was put to bed in Wilkins's houſe; and an anodyne being adminiſtered to him, he reſted better than, from the circumſtances, could have

been expected. But ſo great was the impreſſion which the miſerable ſituation of his boſom friend, and old ſchool fellow, made on the tender breaſt of Mr. Wilkins, that he did not go to bed that night. The manner in which he paſſed the night, can only be imagined by thoſe who are acquainted with the warmth of his friendſhip, and his extreme ſenſibility.

Next morning he appeared remarkably ſolemn and thoughtful, and after M—— was gone home, (peace having firſt been concluded with the enemy) locked himſelf up in his ſtudy till noon. He did the ſame after finiſhing his buſineſs (for he ate nothing that day) and we heard no more of him for upwards

upwards of five hours. About nine o'clock at night he rang for me. I found him with a variety of books lying open before him, which I imagined he had been conſulting. He placed them a little aſide, and begged me to ſit down. After ſeveral painful ſighs, and a variety of other evident tokens of grief of heart, he opened the buſineſs on which he had called me, in the manner following.

He firſt informed me of the preceding night's diſaſter, as already related; and then poured out, in very lively and affecting ſtrains, his grief for his unhappy friend's misfortune; after having given a looſe to which he thus proceeded.

"Aſſuredly it is poſſible in nature to cure, or correct the irregularities of temper, as well as to heal bodily diſeaſes. The Creator, who has been ſo careful in the latter reſpect, cannot have wholly overlooked the former. It would be incongruous to ſuppoſe it, ſeeing that our happineſs depends not leſs on the harmony of the temper, than the health of the body. When, for example, a man and woman are joined together for life, and a fault in the temper of one of them turns that ſtate into a curſe, which was expected to have been a ſource of happineſs, the party not in fault is even made more miſerable than the other. But this is evidently unjuſt; and, together with various other conſidera-

tions,

tions, which have occurred in the courſe of this day's intenſe application to the ſubject, have convinced me that nature has provided proper remedies for the *temper*, and that, as in phyſic, nothing but our induſtry is wanting to diſcover them.

"On conſulting ſuch authors as are likely to throw any light on this myſterious and difficult ſubject, I find that ſome of them propoſe to regulate the temper by means of proper diet. I approve of the principle, but it would be a work of time. And beſides there would hardly be a poſſibility of getting any patient, much leſs one of ſo violent a caſt of temper as the lady in queſtion, to renounce all other grati-

fications, and perſevere for life in the regimen required. I have even reaſon to think that the advantages to be derived from it, would, by no means, compenſate for the inconveniencies, eſpecially in the caſe before us. But I flatter myſelf I have been ſo happy as to hit on a method which will not only effect the deſired purpoſe *at once*, but in a far more effectual and infallible manner than could poſſibly be hoped for from the plan juſt mentioned.

"I find related in a celebrated author, that the blood of a dog, transfuſed into the body of a man, communicated to the latter the mental characteriſtic properties of the former. That the man, for example, barked, howled, ſnarled,

ſnarled, &c. in every reſpect like a dog. This fact, I cannot but obſerve, is demonſtratively confirmed by the well known principle, that *the life is in the blood*; for from thence it follows of courſe, that *ſuch as the blood is, ſuch is the animal*. Hence appears the reaſon of a well known phenomenon, which has often ſtruck me, but for which I have not, till now, been able to account. Animals of different ſpecies have different and ſpecific tempers. The fox, for example, is ſubtle; the aſs dull. The lion is courageous, the hare timid. The tyger is fierce; the lamb quiet and gentle. And in like manner we might run through the whole animal creation. Theſe differences of temper evidently

proceed from the different and ſpecific nature of their *blood*.

" From this theory the eaſieſt inference imaginable follows, viz. *that the temper or characteriſtic ſtate of the* MIND *of an animal, may be varied by altering the nature of its blood.* And it appears evident to me, that as different *vegetables* were calculated to heal ſuch and ſuch diſeaſes of the *body*, ſo the deſign of nature in thus varying the tempers of *animals*, was, that they might be applied to the curing the diſorders of the *temper*. This obſervation indeed, has not eſcaped the notice of former philoſophers. Thus, the hearts of lions eaten, have been thought to inſpire courage; the fleſh of goats, luſt; and

ſo

ſo of others. But they have evidently proceeded on a wrong principle; for not only the blood of animals when killed is purpoſely *thrown away*, but the parts eaten, by paſſing through the digeſtive organs, have their nature entirely altered; and as if they were not already *dead* enough, they are further changed by the deſtructive force of fire; though it is obvious, that not only the *blood*, but the *living blood*, is the only part of an animal on which, in the preſent buſineſs, we can have any dependance. From this reaſoning therefore, as well as from the fact before recited, it is evident that *the blood itſelf, in its natural and living ſtate, muſt be transfuſed immediately into the vaſcular*

lar ſyſtem, and then it will undoubtedly have the effect deſired.

" This diſcovery, therefore, of the great deſign of nature in varying the *tempers* of animals, and its *cauſe*, we are enabled to apply to the moſt important purpoſes, though evidently no other than thoſe originally intended; all creatures having been made for the good of man, and ſubſervient to his uſe. By transfuſing the living blood of animals into the veſſels of the human ſpecies, we may vary their *temper* as we pleaſe. If, for example, a man has a termagant wife, by transfuſing into her the blood of a lamb, ſhe ſhall become gentle and mild. If ſhe be impatient, the blood of an aſs will

make

make a very *Grizzle* of her. If fooliſh, the blood of a fox will make her a wit; and if as croſs as Juno, the blood of turtle doves will bring her down to be as kind and complying as Venus herſelf. And all this will be done without any trouble or expence, or ſuch at leaſt as is not worth mentioning, which adds to the merit of the diſcovery, and is a farther proof that it had its foundation in an original deſign of nature, agreeable to what has been already mentioned.

"Now I mean to apply this diſcovery in the caſe of my unfortunate friend; and am confident that the moſt happy effects will immediately reſult from it. The only doubt that remains with me,

and

and on which I would requeſt your judgment, is, " whether the *aſs* or the *lamb* is the ingredient moſt wanting in the compoſition of the lady in queſtion ?"

I could not ſuppreſs an immoderate fit of laughter on hearing ſo ridiculous a propoſal ſo ſeriouſly delivered. Abſurd as it was, yet for the ſake of ſecuring his friendſhip, I would willingly have forwarded it, could it have been done with the leaſt proſpect of ſucceſs. But as that was not the caſe, the following appeared to me to be the more elegible mode of conduct.

After paving the way to my diſſentient, by paying him the moſt fulſome compliments

compliments on the ingenuity of his ſyſtem, I replied, "that in my opinion the queſtion was, not what animals ſhould be employed on the occaſion, but whether it was poſſible ſo far to ſubdue the *tyger* in the lady's diſpoſition as to get her to ſubmit to the operation at all? For that very probably ſhe would ring poor M—— no very agreeable changes on the words *aſs* and *lamb*. That from the famous inſtance of the foreign nobleman, it was a doubt with me whether the operation could be performed with ſafety. And, in fact, whether the relation in the author to whom he alluded, was not entirely fabulous, however conſonant it might be to his (Wilkins's) admirable theory. That ſuppoſing it

true,

true, yet as the man animated with the blood of a dog, performed the *actions* of that animal, whether it would not equally follow that the *braying of the aſs*, or the *bleating of the lamb*, among other properties of theſe animals, would not alſo be transferred to the lady? Though probably, her huſband would rather bear with thoſe, than with her tongue in its preſent ſtate.—That I ſubmitted to him, whether it would not be prudent to try the event of the experiment previouſly on *animals?* For that if it would ſucceed agreeable to the theory in human ſubjects, it muſt equally in them. The blood of a lion, for example, transfuſed into the veſſels of an hare, would give that timid animal courage, in the

ſame proportion as it would to man. And the blood of a fox would impart wiſdom alike to the aſs, and the dunce of the human ſpecies." Wilkins had diſcernment enough to perceive the juſtneſs of the laſt mentioned argument, and agreed to make the experiments, which we ſet about that very evening. We procured ſeveral dogs, cats, and lambs; an aſs, an hare; and a fox, from a fellow in the town, who had ſeveral, which he carried about for ſhew; together with a variety of ſuch other animals as were attainable; and the two following days were ſpent in transfuſions; the particulars of which it would be tedious to relate. The reſults, however, were ſuch as that in many caſes, either the animals

animals died, or elſe became ſo ill that no juſt inference could be drawn. But in general, the appearances with regard to the *temper*, were, by no means, favourable to Mr. Wilkins's theory. The aſs retained his ſtupidity, though animated with the blood of the fox. The lamb did not bark, though filled with the blood of the dog. The cat did not appear to be leſs irritable, notwithſtanding that the blood of the gentle lamb glided through its veſſels; neither was the hare more fierce, though actuated with the vital principal of the cat. In ſhort, the reſults of the experiments, were ſo far from verifying Mr. Wilkins's theory, that himſelf at length, convinced of its abſurdity, reluctantly gave it up.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE I wrote laſt, we have been favoured with the company of our old friend and ſchool-fellow, Jack Steady. In return from a viſit to a place not far from hence, his horſe fell with him, and Mr. Wilkins being the neareſt medical gentleman, he was brought hither for aſſiſtance. His bruiſes, however, proved to be but trifling; he was more *frightened* than *hurt*; and in conſequence of the *former* rather than the *latter*, readily accepted Wilkins's invitation to take up his reſidence with him for that night. I did not happen to be at home when he

came, and you will gueſs at our mutual ſurpriſe and pleaſure at the unexpected rencounter on my entering the room. "Harcourt!" ſaid Steady, in amazement, "Is it really thee?" Without waiting to anſwer, I ran up to him, caught his hand with both mine, poured out the joy of my heart at meeting him, together with the moſt ardent gratitude for his viſit; and, imagining he had come purpoſely to ſee me, aſked, "how he came to know that I lived here?" He replied, "that though he would gladly have gone twice that diſtance to ſee me, his preſent viſit was not owing to deſign, for that he was ignorant till that moment of the place of my reſidence." And both himſelf, and Wilkins, proceeded

ceeded to inform me of the particulars of the accident. Finding that his hurt was ſo trivial, I could not refrain from expreſſing my joy at his misfortune, ſince it had been the occaſion of ſo happy an interview. Wilkins ſeemed delighted that he had obliged ſo dear a friend of mine; and after dinner, very politely retired to his ſtudy, leaving us, with a bottle of wine, to ourſelves. After much talk on domeſtic affairs, and enquiry after old acquaintance, (you, in particular, was not forgotten by him) he proceeded to queſtion me concerning my preſent ſituation, of which I gave him a very particular account, together with the character, and a variety of anecdotes of Mr. Wilkins, with which he ſeemed greatly delight-

ed. And after indulging a hearty laugh, ſaid, "I alſo have to do with a genius little leſs ſingular than yours, though of a different caſt;" and then in his turn proceeded to relate the hiſtory of the gentleman whom he was pleaſed to call his *principal.*

"I have lately," ſaid he, "taken up my diploma; and as my circumſtances will not permit me to launch forth into practice on my own bottom, have put myſelf under the protection of the noted HYPOCRITUS* WRIGGLE, with whom I live in the capacity of *author*, and *medical aſſiſtant*. This gentleman has the ſkill to cover an artful and deſigning diſpoſition, with the outward

* Quere? Is not this word mis-ſpelt? ought it not to be HIPPOCRATES?

outward ſemblance of gravity and ſimplicity. He paſſes with the public for a man of humanity and deep learning; and has had the addreſs to work himſelf into conſiderable practice by his ſubtle conduct, an hiſtory of which might aptly enough be termed, "The "Art of Riſing in Phyſic." I ſhall not trouble you with a recital of his intriguing with apothecaries and nurſes, of being called out from company, and a long catalogue of other artifices, (all which he has adopted with ſucceſs) but proceed directly to what may be properly called *his own.*

"His firſt great maxim is, "bring "your name often before the public; "it will, by degrees, become fami-

" liar to them, and they will at length " think you a man of conſequence." For this purpoſe, the doctor contrives to have his name appear every now and then in paragraphs in the newſpapers, which every body read. For example.

" Yeſterday as Dr. Wriggle was re- " turning *in his chariot* from ſuch a " place, he was attacked by two high- " waymen, who demanded his mo- " ney, &c."—Or,

" On Wedneſday laſt, as Dr. Wriggle and his lady, &c."

I interrupted him with obſerving, that the caſe was natural enough for a perſon when robbed to publiſh it in the newſpapers.

But

But replied Steady, "Dr. Wriggle "was never robbed."

"Not robbed?"

"No. It was a mere invention, a pretext for *bringing his name before the public!* Half the robberies we read of in the newſpapers were never committed.—There are a variety of other methods by which a man may *bring his name before the public* in the newſpapers, all which Dr. Wriggle has ſucceſsfully employed.

2dly. "Let every thing about you "ſpeak learning and gravity."

"The hall of the Doctor's houſe, for example, is a perfect *muſeum*. A patient no ſooner has the ſtreet door opened to him than he is ſtruck with the appearance of moſſes, ſhells, dried foreign animals, and the like. He is led immediately to conclude, that the Doctor (like your Solomon) is a very *deep* man, as indeed he is in *one* ſenſe of the word. Dr. Wriggle has even had the addreſs to unite both the foregoing maxims. He has made a preſent to a certain celebrated Repoſitory of Natural Curioſities, of a *mummy*, which he has taken care to have placed in a very conſpicuous part of the collection. The mummy indeed is faſtened up in a box, and is never ſeen, or enquired

enquired after. But on the box itſelf, is written in characters ſufficiently legible, THE GIFT of HYPOCRITUS WRIGGLE, M. D. &c. The viſitants learn by this, that there is ſuch a man as *Dr. Wriggle*, and that he would be thought a great *virtuoſo*,* which is all that the Doctor meant by the preſent.

3dly.

* The following anecdote, related by Steady, will ſerve as a ſpecimen of the Doctor's knowledge in his *favorite ſtudy*.

"Dr. Wriggle is fond of being thought a great naturaliſt, and on that ſubject will freely converſe even with thoſe who are by much his inferiors. He had, in particular, an old gardener, who uſed to procure him inſects, &c. in order that the Dr. might find them out by the deſcriptions in his ſyſtematical authors. The old man

3dly. "Engage in controverſy with eminent men," a moſt excellent way of bringing a man into public notice. This was the Doctor's motive for attacking Dr. Variolus, and others. It was the ſame principle that led him to deſcend

man, one day, deſirous of trying the Doctor's ſkill, ſhewed him a very *particular* and *well known* inſect, aſking, "if he could tell him what it was?" Wriggle viewed it with attention, "Is it ? (ſaid he to himſelf) or ? or rather ? &c." running on with a number of generic and ſpecific names, which the man (who told me the ſtory) could neither recollect nor underſtand. At length, confeſſing his ignorance, he aſked the gardener if *he* knew it? "I dont know what "you *larned* men may call it in Greek and "Latin, (ſaid the gardener) but we plain fellows call it a cr—b l—e."

deſcend to an altercation with the celebrated Dr. Mareſwater. Here indeed he had a double advantage; for the public were artfully led to believe that he engaged in this taſk from a principle of pure *philanthrophy!* A principle of all others the moſt remote from the breaſt of Dr. Wriggle.

4thly. "Always pretend that you have a deal of buſineſs on your hands, and the world will conclude that you are in great practice." With this view Dr. Wriggle is conſtantly out ſo many hours in the day, and always in a buſtle. *At firſt ſetting out*, he uſed to have a number of poor people whom he viſited *gratis*. He ſat them down in his liſt

liſt as *prime patients*, which liſt he took ſufficient care to diſplay to his brethren of the faculty. With the poor themſelves, who were incapable of diving into his motives, this paſſed for *charity*. But Dr. Wriggle always took care that his carriage ſhould ſtop, not at the houſe of the *pauper*, but of ſome perſon of conſequence in the neighbourhood; the inhabitants of which, were, in courſe, imagined to be the Doctor's *patients*.

"If a friend happens to be with him at home, and another friend chances to call on him at the time that the former is going away, the Doctor takes a guinea or two ſlily out of his pocket, and diſplaying them in his hand with a

ſeemingly

ſeemingly careleſs air, ſays,—"You "ſee, Sir, theſe are the people we get "our money by."—The viſitor is thereby made to believe, that the gentleman was a *patient*, and that the two guineas had juſt been received as a *fee*.

5thly. "Force yourſelf into the company of great men, and the world will think you one of the number; according to the old maxim, *tell me the company you keep, and I will tell you what you are.*" It was *partly* with this view that he courted the acquaintance of the famous Dr. Worthy,*

make

* By the overſetting of an ink ſtand, the following paragraphs were ſo blotted in the copy, that the whole of them could not be made out.

make the world believe
first in his *friendſhip*
ſucceed him in *practice*
great man ſaw motives
turned him out

laſt illneſs *ſeen*
by, much leſs truſt
health, called every
day to *enquire* about him
admitted no further than the hall,
ſtop
there a conſiderable time that people might *ſee his carriage at the great man's door*; and you will eaſily conclude that Dr. Wriggle did not fail to make his advantage of this circumſtance with the public.

" With

"With a ſimilar view, he has ſince announced the publication of his *dear friend's* works

unfiniſhed papers,
letters never intended for the publ
good round price
beſides
makes other advan-
tages of *friend's* repu-
tation imitates his
hand writing in his preſcr
champion of
his *unaſſailed* fame
Benſonian medal

apothecaries, nurſes, and others, in his intereſt and *pay*, in different parts of

of the town, who have it in inſtruction to *blazon their patron's fame*. The language of the public now is, "The world has ſuffered a great loſs in the of death Dr. Worthy." My friend's *puffers* are directed to reply, "Why to be ſure, Dr. Worthy was a great phyſician, ſo was Philip of Macedon a great hero; but *Philip* was ſucceeded by an ALEXANDER;—and *Worthy* by a WRIGGLE!"

"After interrupting him with a hearty laugh at his deſcription of his maſter's character, my curioſity prompted me to aſk him—"But what, pray, is your "buſineſs with this gentleman? Though *apothecaries* employ aſſiſtants, I never heard that there were *journeymen phyſicians*."

"My

"My employment, he replied, "is *chiefly* in the capacity of Author and Puff. Dr. Wriggle, as I obſerved before, is continually making his appearance in public, either in paragraphs or eſſays in the newſpapers and magazines, or elſe in pamphlets. But the Doctor cannot write; and to me he has modeſty (a quality by the way which you would not expect to meet with in Wriggle) to acknowledge it. *He* hints the nature of what he would have written, and *I* put it to paper. I have now been abſent from him for ſome time, during which the public has heard nothing from Dr. Wriggle. Now I am returning to London, you will ſee that the town will be deluged with his publications. The Doctor,

beſides, is about removing to another quarter; * and we muſt contrive, (I fear at poor Worthy's expence) to appear frequently in print, in order that the public may know, from the date of our Puffs, where he lives. A moſt excellent mode of advertiſement!

(C——e the ink ſtand!)

"You have ſeen, I preſume, ſeveral treatiſes publiſhed with the Doctor's *name*. Theſe, though not very graciouſly received by the faculty, or applauded by the reviews, the Doctor has had the intereſt to get well ſpoken of in at leaſt *one* publication, with the printer of which he is intimately acquainted.

* Some *palace*, I think, or *nobleman's ſeat*.

quainted. And you will judge of his *modeſty* by the following account of his own *oration*, written and ſent by himſelf.

"We have often had occaſion to "admire Dr. Wriggle as a *phyſician*; "we have more than once admired "him as a *philoſopher*. We have now "to admire him in the character of "an *orator*; to form which, (accord-"ing to Cicero) ſuch an infinite num-"ber of important qualifications muſt "concur. In the multiplicity of buſi-"neſs in which this learned phyſician "is conſtantly engaged, we wonder "how he can poſſibly find time, &c." This, though it may be matter of amazement to the *printer*, and even to

the *public*, is by no means ſo to Dr. *Wriggle*, or *me*."*—He was proceeding to anecdotes more curious than any of thoſe related. But at that inſtant Mr. Wilkins, to my great regret and diſappointment, imagining, I ſuppoſe, that we had ſaid all we had to ſay to each other, returned from his ſtudy, in order to ſpend, with his gueſt, the remainder of the evening. Supper was therefore brought, (unwelcome meal!) a converſation of a very different nature was introduced; we chearfully emptied a bottle or two, and then retired to reſt. In the morning, Steady roſe early to purſue his journey, and make up for his loſt time. And after our taking a mutual and affectionate farewell, without waiting for the formality of breakfaſt, he rode off.

As

* See alſo the GAL —; in which he has himſelf ſtiled THE DIVINE WRIGGLE.

As, however, I have reaſon to think that Wilkins will be in London in the courſe of next ſummer, (when he propoſes to call on his viſitor, in order to get introduced to Wriggle, of whoſe character I have given him the above account) and as Steady has promiſed to commence a correſpondence with me, I hope I ſhall ſoon be enabled to delineate to you the remainder of this extraordinary character, and even to introduce him to you in *propria perſona*. Should that be the caſe, you may conſider this as a mere *introduction* to the performance, the *prologue* to the *comedy*, which I doubt not will afford us both, ample matter of merriment and riſibility.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXII.

DEAR SIR,

MR. Wilkins had lately been dipping at times into the *Univerſal Hiſtory*; and one day at dinner our converſation turned on the various revolutions which had taken place in the different kingdoms of the world. He expatiated with great eloquence on the excellence of hiſtory in informing us of the events which had happened previous to our own exiſtence, and enlarged much on the happineſs, as well as important advantages, which mankind derived from that rich ſource. At the ſame time, not ſatisfied with the *paſt*, his curioſity was alſo raiſed with reſpect

reſpect to the *future*; and he lamented exceedingly, that in human affairs we had no means of obtaining the leaſt information in that particular. He expreſſed deep regret that the moral world was not governed by laws equally obvious with the natural; and that their events were not alike ſubject to mathematical calculation. If we would know the ſtate of the planetary ſyſtem five hundred or a thouſand years hence, we can ſatisfy ourſelves, by a proper calculus, with the greateſt exactneſs and certainty; but in affairs which more intimately concern us, we are left wholly in the dark. In the planetary ſyſtem, we have the requiſite *data* from objects of ſenſe. We know the laws of their revolution; and by

obſerving their places at preſent, can compute them to any future period. But in morals nothing of this kind takes place. The objects which only can afford the *data*, beſides being fleeting and uncertain, come not under the cognizance of our ſenſes. All is tranſacted behind the curtain; ſo that the only method whereby we could poſſibly acquaint ourſelves with future events, would be by rendering life ——————but that is imp———. Ha!" At that inſtant a new idea ſeemed to have ſtruck him; he pauſed awhile, looked thoughtful, then ſtarted from the table, and haſtened to his ſtudy, where he remained, loſt to the little concerns of buſineſs, the whole afternoon.

In

In the evening he made his appearance, and took me with him into the parlour. He ſeemed to be wonderfully pleaſed as with ſome great diſcovery. After making an apology for his abrupt departure from dinner, he deſired me to ſit down, took his ſeat by me, and then addreſſed me as follows:

"I have been ſo happy, my dear friend, as to have hit on a method of acquiring the important ſpecies of knowledge, which at dinner time I ſo pathetically lamented the want of; and cannot but congratulate mankind on a diſcovery which will afford them ſuch infinite advantages and ſatisfaction. The *future* will now be more

compleatly

compleatly known to us than even the *paſt!*—I ſhewed you at noon that the acquiring a knowledge of future moral events, by mathematical computation, was, in the nature of things, impoſſible; and as we have (now at leaſt) no intelligence with thoſe ſuperior beings, who may be ſuppoſed capable of giving us information in theſe matters, the only method that remains would be *to preſerve our exiſtence* (if poſſible) *to the period whoſe hiſtory we want to be acquainted with.* Now I flatter myſelf, that I have diſcovered a means whereby this effect, ſtrange as it may ſeem, may be brought about.

"But to proceed to the ſubject.—By the celebrated diſcovery of the Ruſſian academicians,

academicians, we are enabled to correct our erroneous ideas, relative to freezing, and no longer confine them to chryſtallized water, whitened fields, hoary trees, and aching fingers. All bodies in a ſolid ſtate we now conſider as ſo many ſpecies of ice. Iron, for example, is the ice of the martial fluor, and tallow the ice of animal oil.

"Now it is to be noticed that the operations of nature are never performed in a ſolid, but always in a fluid or vapoury form. The ice of *muſt* will not ferment. The ice of animal oil will not burn. To theſe proceſſes it is requiſite that they ſhould be thawed into fluids, or even rarified, by a ſtill greater heat, into vapour. While they continue

tinue in a ſolid form, they remain in a ſtate of ſuſpence, of inactivity, of ſleep, of death.

" A candle, for example, may be conſidered as ice; and therefore its powers, or active principles, are in a ſtate of ceſſation, or ſuſpence; even as a clock when it is ſtanding ſtill, but which *art* can again ſet a-going at pleaſure. If I put this candle into a proper ſtate by means of heat, it kindles, it flames; and, if left to itſelf, would, in a few hours, burn entirely away. If I let this candle burn only a-while, then put it out, or in other words, reſtore it to its ſtate of inactivity, I may keep it for any length of time; but its power of inflammation remains, and may

may be renewed at pleaſure. I may, for inſtance, burn it a few minutes now, a few minutes a year hence, and ſo on till it be conſumed. But by varying the time of its combuſtion, and the interval of its renovation, I may prolong its exiſtence to any diſtant period I pleaſe.

" We have every reaſon to infer from analogy, that flame and life are, at the bottom, one and the ſame thing. Modern diſcoveries have placed this matter even beyond doubt. Call therefore the inflammation of the candle its *life*. Let it burn, (that is *live*, or *exiſt*) a little now, again a year hence, and ſo on, till its life be quite burnt out. Apply this to the life of an animal, and

what

what a glorious idea preſents itſelf to our view! I am aſtoniſhed that it ſhould never have occurred to a philoſopher before.

"The period of our exiſtence is uſually confined to about threeſcore years, and we have hitherto lived it out *in continuo*. We are, therefore, confined as it were to a moment, a mere ſpan of exiſtence. We know indeed what has paſt, though very imperfectly, from hiſtory; and our ſenſes inform us of what is going forward during the ſhort period of our being. But of futurity, alas! we remain in a ſtate of total ignorance, for reaſons already given. Yet how many thouſands of our countrymen are at this inſtant anxious to

know

know what will be the ſtate of Britain five hundred years hence? And what would they not give to be able to peep up at that diſtant period to ſatisfy themſelves in ſo important a particular! What would not Halley have given could he have lived in the year 58, to be ſatisfied of the truth or falſhood of his doctrine, relative to the cometary ſyſtem! And what pleaſure would it not give a monarch, or a gentleman, to be able to know the ſtate of his poſterity, or an author that of his fame, at the diſtance of thirty centuries? But all this may be obtained with the greateſt eaſe, by means of the diſcovery, which my good genius has this day ſuggeſted to me. By living a little now, and a little then, and ſo on

repeatedly,

repeatedly, I may know for example, how the world goes an hundred, a thouſand, or ten thouſand years hence; I may prolong the period of my exiſtence even to the day of reſurrection.

"That the analogy really holds good with regard to animals, is certain from facts that are frequent in our days, though an age or two ago they would have been deemed impoſſible. We ſee the vital motions of human beings to ſtand ſtill, during a whole hour. They are then in the ſtate of an extinguiſhed candle. At the end of that time, life is rekindled in them by the aſſiſtance of art, as effectually as is the flame of the extinguiſhed taper by fire. They then both equally burn on; and if life

can

can be renewed after having been interrupted for an hour, it may equally be renewed at the diſtance of a year, or a century. We have only to preſerve the body in the mean time from putrefaction; and this may effectually be done by *freezing*, which is the ſtate of the non-exiſtent animal already ſuppoſed.

"Now as I am determined to have the honour of being the firſt ſubject of this glorious experiment, I would wiſh to conſult with you a little about the *means*. Shall I ſhut myſelf up in an ice-houſe? Will the temperature of this climate be ſufficient to ſecure me againſt the influence of the ſuns reſolvent beams? Or had I not

better, think you, retire to ſome more northern region, or to the ſummit of ſome Alpine mountain, where, intombed in everlaſting ice, or buried in eternal ſnow, my automaton may be ſafely preſerved till twice fifty years; at the expiration of which I mean to be revived for a while, in order to ſee what is doing in the world, and to learn what has gone forward during the interval of my non-entity: (How the people of that age will ſtare at me!) When this point is ſettled, if you, my dear friend, will be ſo kind as to take upon you the management of my congelation, and interment, I will take care to leave proper directions to my deſcendants, in order to

my

my being revivified at the desired period."

A person unacquainted with Mr. Wilkins, who should hear the relation of this curious anecdote, would think it romance. To have kept my countenance at this singular proposal, would have argued an apathy beyond that of a Stoic; and I was never more at a loss than for the manner in which I should answer it. Christmas was now at hand. To have given him the least offence, might have been fatal to my repose. Mere reasoning, I judged, from the firm confidence which he seemed to have in his theory, would have been by no means sufficient to undeceive him. After tickling his va-

nity, therefore, with a profuſion of compliments, expreſſive of my *admiration*, and *aſtoniſhment* at the depth of his genius, and the infinite merit of his diſcovery, I judged it moſt prudent to anſwer him in the manner following.

That I by no means meant to deprive him of the glory of being the firſt perſon who ſhould make this great experiment. But that as the buſineſs was as yet merely ſpeculative, though to the eye of reaſon abſolutely demonſtrable, I had ſo great a regard for his valuable life (as well as for the welfare and happineſs of my fellow creatures, which were ſo nearly connected with it) that I would preſume to ſubmit

mit whether it would not be better firſt to make the experiment on ſome animal? If it proved ſucceſsful, as indeed there was no doubt, he might ſtill have the honour of being the firſt *human being* on whom it was tried, and even the firſt *animal* on whom it was made in the way he mentioned.

As he had no doubt of its ſucceſs, he conſented to the propoſal, not to ſatisfy any ſcruples of his own, but merely to convince *me*. As it happened at that very time to be froſty, he ſat about the experiment the ſame evening. A little dog, partly by natural, and partly by artificial cold, was compleatly frozen; and you may eaſily gueſs how eager he was the next

morning to ſatisfy me of the truth of his theory by the event. The animal was put into warm water, and the methods propoſed by the Humane Society were made uſe of to revive him. He thawed indeed, but alas! life was not reſtored! It was only *a thawed dead dog!*

Concluding that there was ſome error in the *mode*, he repeated the experiment, and applied the reſolvent principle in different ways. By the vapour of water, for example; by warm quickſilver, oil, ſand, the open air, by friction, and by the human breath; but in neither inſtance did the reviviſcence, in the ſmalleſt degree, take place.

At

At length, it occurred to him, that in cold countries they reſtored the frozen parts of animals, by rubbing them with ſnow; other means of thawing, proving not only ineffectual, but even fatal to the part. As we had, a few days before, a fall of ſnow, he tried the experiment in this mode; but it failed, alas! though repeated in every variety of circumſtances which even *his* inventive genius could ſuggeſt.

Having thus left him to undeceive himſelf by *facts*, he was, by this time, I imagined, prepared to liſten to *ratiocination*. I therefore ventured to ſubmit to him "whether there was, in fact, the analogy which he imagined

between the candle, and an animal? That the candle was a mere chemical ſubſtance; whereas the animal was an organized body; the fine mechaniſm of which was probably deſtroyed by the expanſion conſequent on the congelation. That the inſtances of recovery after drowning, if they bore any analogy to flame, could only probably be compared to the *blowing in of a candle whoſe wick is not yet extinguiſhed*; but that the analogy did not, by any means, hold good when the vital power of the animal was once wholly ſuppreſſed." In ſhort, though it was hard for him to give up ſo darling and dazzling an hypotheſis, yet by theſe reaſonings, together with his own experiments, he ſeemed at length

length to be convinced; and I believe he has now laid aſide all thoughts of putting his congelation project in execution.

I am, &c.

P. S. *Chriſtmas* is at hand. My next, I hope, will inform you of the completion of my happineſs. O! how I long for the joyful period!

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

My Dear Friend,

THE happy ſeaſon approached; I felt an encreaſing deſire of its arrival, and the laſt week ſeemed longer than all the preceding interval. As it was ſo long ſince I had ſeen the dear angel (for to a lover what an eternity is three months!) my anxiety for an interview became the more ardent, and was encreaſed by a thouſand little circumſtances of not ſufficient conſequence to you to mention. A child did not long more for the promiſed toy, on the approaching fair, than I did for the arrival of that bliſsful tide which was to return to my arms the dear object of my wiſhes, on whom the

the whole happineſs of my future life entirely reſted.

At length, the happy period arrived. The poſt chaiſe ſtopped at the door, and before I could run to hand her out, ſhe entered the ſhop. Our eyes met inſtantly, and but that the laws of vitality forbad, our ſouls would have ruſhed through them into union. We were conſtrained, however, to put ourſelves to the mortification of affecting indifference by the arrival of Mr. Wilkins from the parlour, whither he conducted the dear charmer, whoſe expreſſive looks, gave me the pleaſing aſſurance that her affection for me remained in its full force.

It ſeemed an age to dinner time, but at length I was called. When I entered the dining room, her anxious eyes met mine, as if waiting for them, and involuntarily declared her ſentiments in much ſtronger language than words. She ſeemed conſcious of this, and overpowered with bluſhes, inſtantly turned them aſide, with a modeſt dignity which I even adored. I paid her thoſe compliments before Mr. Wilkins, on the occaſion of her return, which any indifferent perſon would have done from mere courteſy. And though I could not refrain from continual glances, yet ſuch was the majeſty of her deportment, or the awe of parental preſence, that I could not once catch her eyes during dinner time,

nor

nor could I obtain that ſatisfaction even when I retired, which I own alarmed me. About an hour after dinner, Mr. Wilkins went out on buſineſs. I immediately flew to the parlour, and threw myſelf at the feet of my ſoul's idol, expreſſing the tranſports which I felt at her return. Perceiving by her reception of me that my fears were ill founded, and that her affection was even encreaſed, I ſprung from the ground, claſped her to my melting boſom, and we remained for ſome minutes mutually intranced in bliſs. Recovering, I bathed her dear lips with kiſſes, and was proceeding to pour out the raptures of an heart overflowing with gratitude and love, after ſo long an abſence from its object; but the

firſt

firſt embrace at meeting over, which ſhe judged it not improper to indulge, ſhe gently put me away with her wonted ineffable modeſty. I ſeated myſelf by her ſide, and had the inexpreſſible happineſs of being in her company near two hours; at the end of which time ſhe expected her father's return. I enjoyed during that bliſsful period all the happineſs which honourable love could aſk, or female virtue beſtow.

In the courſe of this bliſsful interview, it was agreed, that as ſhe was now to remain at home, our acquaintance ſhould be continued, under proper reſtrictions, for a few weeks, in order to give it the air of novelty; at the

the end of which time, I had leave to propoſe the matter to Mr. Wilkins, by whoſe determination, however, ſhe was ſtill reſolved to abide, whether favourable or not, to her *wiſhes* (for that was her endearing expreſſion.) But he was not to know that we had, as yet, formed any connection; I was only to aſk his permiſſion to *pay my addreſſes to her*.

The days glided happily on, and I enjoyed in her company, at intervals, the full meaſure of bliſs that nature was capable of ſuſtaining. I daily dined with her, played with her occaſionally at cards; heard her divine voice, while ſhe accompanied it with ſuch ſtrains, as only a celeſtial could

equal

equal. And my being conſtantly in her dear preſence, and united with her in the Hymeneal band, were all that was now wanting to render my happineſs compleat. I had the ſatisfaction to find that her wiſhes entirely correſponded with my own.

My aſſiduity to pleaſe Mr. Wilkins in the mean time, you will eaſily imagine, was not a little quickened. I had formerly ventured, on many occaſions, to ſpeak my own ſentiments on his philoſophical opinions and projects; but I now flattered him even in his abſurdities, and (God forgive me) frequently applauded his wiſdom, when I ought, in juſtice, to have ridiculed his folly. There was no inſtance,

though

though ever ſo trivial, in which I did not ſtrive to oblige him, and win his friendſhip.

At length the three long weeks were paſt, and the important period arrived when I ſhould ſolicit him for the completion of my happineſs.

I was with him in his ſtudy, and we had juſt been reviſing ſome of his pieces for publication. I repeated, and urged more home, the puffing ſcheme which I had lately ſuggeſted to him; he at length confeſſed himſelf to have been highly delighted with it; that he had already determined to adopt it, and only feared that I ſhould one day or other betray the impoſture.

But I pledged myſelf to him for ſecrecy in ſuch ardent terms, that he was ſatisfied of my confidence, and we even drew up a copy of the advertiſement. In the courſe of our reviſe, I ſtuck at no flattery to tickle him in his weakeſt and moſt tender part; I found indeed that there was none ſo groſs that he would not ſwallow. And knowing the quarter from whence he had his fears, I even ventured to tell him, (pardon kind Venus the lie!) that "I "was acquainted with ſeveral of the "gentlemen concerned in the reviews, "and could make intereſt with them "to ſpeak in the higheſt terms of his "performance." The man melted within him at this aſſurance; his heart ſeemed entirely at my diſpoſal; and to

expreſs

expreſs the workings of his gratitude the more ſtrongly, he claſped me ardently to his breaſt, and aſſured me, "that there was nothing that I could "aſk, in his power to grant, which he "would not think himſelf infinite-"ly obliged by giving him an op-"portunity to beſtow." I immediately ſeized the bleſt occaſion. My vanity even ſuggeſted to me, that he had made this unreſerved offer purpoſely to give me an opportunity of aſking the deſired boon. I fell inſtantly at his feet, and ſaid "There is one favour, Sir, in your power to grant, by which you would make me the happieſt of men. I aſk not gold, nor any other bauble of worldly value. But you have a daughter!—Would you deign to

permit me to offer my addreſſes to her, and to uſe your intereſt with her in my behalf, all that I can do for you in future, I ſhall think infinitely too little for ſo great a bleſſing."

He ſtarted back at my propoſal, and ſeemed quite thunder ſtruck! After a long pauſe, with viſible emotions of agony and diſtreſs, he anſwered me in the manner following.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.